

**The Citizens Advisory Committee
Durham, North Carolina**

**January 26, 2009
6:00 P.M. Regular Session**

Place: Conference Room, second floor, Durham Department of Community Development, 807 E. Main Street, Durham, NC

Present: Chairman Charles L. Recktenwald, Vice-Chairman Delvin Davis, Secretary Donn Graves; Recording Secretary Faith M. Thompson, and Members Beart Truitt-Braswell, Kyla Sweet-Chavez, Johnny D. Hawkins, Bernie Stewart; DeWarren K. Langley; Clarissa Grady; Dr. Dorcas M. Bradley

Absent: Robert Buchanan, Tommie Wright-Kearney, SaDonna Wiggins, Corrina Page (Excused)

Presider: Chairman Recktenwald

Also Present: Director Michael Barros (DDCD), Federal Programs Director (Coordinator) Wilmur Conyers (DDCD); Guest – Alvin Aikens, member of Pac 1 (Partners Against Crime (PAC 1) and Northeast Central Durham Leadership Council

- I. Chairman Recktenwald called the meeting to order at 6:06 PM
- II. Chairman Recktenwald stated that a member had requested that the group share a silent moment of meditation and asked if anyone had any objections; there being none, a silent moment of meditation/reflection was held.
- III. Chairman Recktenwald expressed sympathy/empathy for those in the CAC as well as the community facing reduction in force personally or their family members.
- IV. Chairman Recktenwald called attention to a substitute agenda which was modified to allow Director Barros to make comments before having to leave for a meeting with the Durham County Commissioners.
 - a. Member Grady offered motion to approve revised agenda and the motion was seconded by Member Stewart. Motion passed.
- V. Chairman Recktenwald provided a brief history of the origins of the CAC. Some highlights of the history are as follows:
 - a. As part of the 1961 Urban renewal Grant Application process, the Durham City Council appointed 39 citizens to the newly formed Citizen Advisory Committee.

- b. On November 12, 1974 the council appointed a 15 member committee, titled Citizens Participation Committee for Community Development. It was comprised of 5 at-large members; 5 members from the CAC, and 5 members were councilmen.
- c. Given the changes that have occurred in our community, specifically, a decrease in the number of neighborhood organizations actively involved in community development, the current members of the CAC are asked to consider:
 - i. Is there a need for the membership to be reconstituted
 - ii. Should the CAC be dissolved
 - iii. Should the current structure & makeup of the CAC be preserved and the support of the Department and Council be increased?

Member Thompson stated that as the sub-committees meet and discuss their role within the larger body of the CAC, many of these questions will be addressed.

- VI. Director Mike Barros offered some information on how he views the role the CAC plays and its interaction with the Department.
- a. Director Barros sees a real need for the CAC and appreciates the input provided by the CAC.
 - b. Director Barros suggested that there are some Council members who appreciate the role the CAC plays and that there are other council members who think less of the CAC
 - c. Director Barros suggest that members of the CAC visit the non-profit board of director meetings [especially the groups receiving funding from the Community development Department]
 - d. Of the 42 home ownership loans made by the department last year, none were in the targeted neighborhoods [Southwest central Durham; Northeast Central Durham; Southside/St. Theresa]
 - e. Some of the City Council members are against “steering” people toward certain neighborhoods [i.e., the targeted areas] but Director Barros suggested that until people start moving into those areas they will have difficulty changing the nature and face of those neighborhoods.
 - f. Home Rehabilitation (Major and Minor [Emergency]). There is currently a waiting list. It is limited to the elderly and the handicapped.
 - g. Director Barros would like to have the CAC act as an advisory council/advocate before Council on behalf of some of the proposed projects that will help communities regain status as thriving, livable, attractive places to live. Since the CAC can talk to the people who are the actual recipients, they can put a human face on many of the proposals that the department puts before Council.

- h. Question asked about if the department may be able to help with people facing utilities being cutoff for nonpayment during these lean economic times:
 - i. Director Barros responded that it is unlikely since the Department cannot use CDBG monies for direct bill payment and may instead increase their financial counseling. However, there are many non-profits that have applied that are in the business of assisting residents with bills.
 - i. The \$5 million that may become available from the Neighborhood Stabilization program may not be applied equally in the three targeted community areas.
- VII. Members of the CAC were asked to respond to questions about what they saw as the role of the CAC and what individuals could do to assist the CAC in the performance of its role and how the CAC can assist the department of Community Development in meeting its objectives.
 - a. The answers were varied and are not attributed to individual CAC members:
 - i. What do we need to do to be more productive?
 1. Go out with the Department of Housing on Saturdays into the various neighborhoods to meet people and hear their concerns first hand
 2. Increase visibility of the CAC to increase its viability amongst citizens and Council
 3. Arrange a visit to Neighborhood Services to get a feel for the breadth of the services they provide
 4. Meet with the individual PACs/Neighborhoods representatives to learn what the issues are
 5. Go into the neighborhood/communities to conduct an informal survey on what issues face
 6. Tour neighborhoods quarterly
 7. Update CAC website to make it more interactive
 8. Get involved with neighbors
 - ii. What should the CAC expect from the Department?
 1. Keep the CAC aware of issues that are coming before Council that may be of interest to the CAC and its mission
 2. Continued educations about grants and grant activity
 3. Proactive notice of meetings/hearings/forums about housing issues in Durham
 4. Education about ways that the CAC can help accomplish the purpose/mission/goals of the department
 5. Think of the CAC as a partner – not policy making, not telling the Department what to do

6. Monthly report of project activity
7. Grant activity report every month

VIII. Action on the November 24, 2008 minutes. A correction was made in subsection VI, third sentence: January 24th changed to January 26, 2009. Upon a motion by Member Clarissa Grady and seconded by Secretary Graves, the November 24, 2008 Minutes, with corrections, were accepted.

IX. Subcommittee Reports

- a. Annual Action Plan – One meeting has been held; reviewed priorities; reviewed past two years of funding recommendations as provided by Associate Director Jarvis. Will provide a report with proposed next steps in the next couple of weeks.
- b. Community Planning – One meeting has been held; subcommittee discussed the charge as received from the Chairman and identified 4 of the tasks that were attainable in the next couple of weeks. The subcommittee plans to:
 - i. Partner with neighborhood organizations to determine the needs specific to affordable housing and community development, and to collaborate in addressing solutions and actions.
 1. Contact has been made with Durham Affordable Housing Coalition to arrange attendance at an upcoming meeting.
 - ii. To determine the additional funds the City will receive from the rescue home mortgage legislation- Neighborhood Stabilization Program Act
 - iii. To investigate available funds generated from the 1-cent property tax set aside for 2008-2009 affordable housing and projected funds from the 2009-2010 DDCCD budgets and how the funds are to be allocated/spent
 - iv. Federal Programs Coordinator, Wilbur Conyers, will work with the Subcommittee to obtain information on exactly how the funds will be used to address foreclosures and blight in the community.
 - v. To review neighborhood and target area plans in order to inform the CAC concerning on-going planning activities by the DDCCD for community improvement.
 1. Associate Director Jarvis will work with the subcommittee to help identify these areas and help the Committee prepare a report for the CAC.

X. Durham Department of Community Development – Reports by Federal Programs Coordinator, Wilbur Conyers.

- a. Chapel Hill Road project [Maplewood Square Apartments] – Groundbreaking ceremony February 2, 2009. DHIC, Inc. arranged financing for the property and Self-Help Ventures funds acquired the land. Three hundred thousand dollars will be used for partial financing for 32 apartments); Durham Land Community Trust Fund Inc. will manage the property.

- b. January, 2009 Grant Activity Report – Report entitled City of Durham, Department of Community Development – Current Grant Activity report as of August 2008 was distributed to CAC members.
 - i. Ms. Wilmur Conyers advised that the report was the January 2009 Grant Activity Report
 - ii. Represents all years of activity with status of the grant
 - iii. Report completed by project managers as a tracking mechanism for funds
 - c. Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP) application for funding:
 - i. 18 months to commit these funds [contracts fully executed]
 - ii. DCA [Division of Community Assistance] will receive and disperse the funds to local governments or nonprofits.
 - iii. Office of the Inspector General will monitor the program
 - iv. All applications due the 3rd of February
 - v. Notification of funding possibly as early as March, 2009
 - vi. City of Durham applying for \$5 Million + 5% (\$250,00)
 - vii. Funds are designed to address blight and foreclosures in the community
 - d. Fiscal Year (FY) 2009-1010 CDBG, HOME, and ESG applications – Copies were distributed to CAC members for review. The remaining applications will be sent to Chairman by email for distribution to the members.
 - i. Twenty applications were received this year
 - ii. Notification of HUD funds usually occurs in November but this has not occurred for the last three years.
 - iii. Estimates for 2009-2010 funding are made from allocations of the previous year
- XI. Upon a motion by Recording Secretary Thompson and second by Member Bradley agenda items VII, and IX were tabled until the next meeting of the CAC
- XII. Upon a motion by member Langley and second by member Stewart the January 26, 2009 meeting of the CAC was adjourned at 8:20 PM.

Faith M. Thompson, Recording Secretary